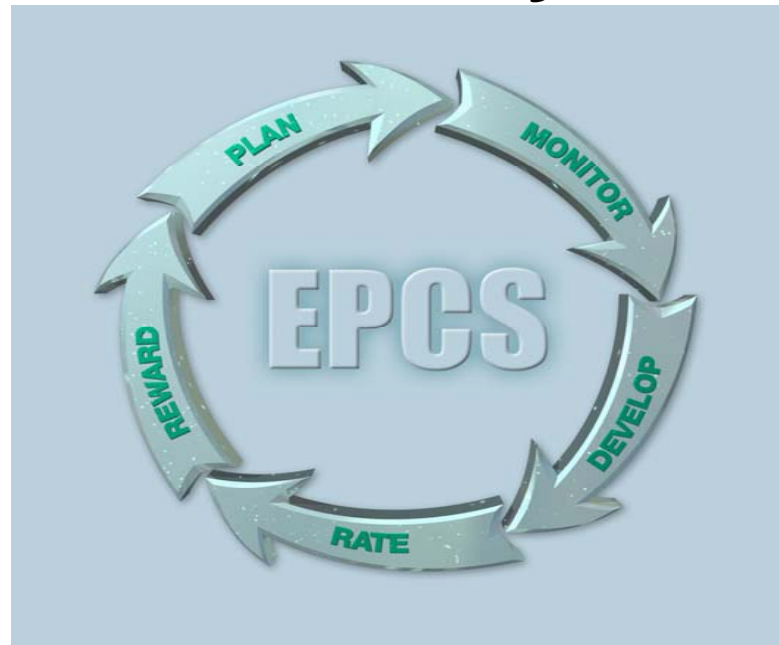


Enhanced Employee Performance Communication System (EPCS)



Putting EPCS into Practice



Purpose



- Support One NASA—We're all working toward our Mission together
- Create partnerships between employees and supervisors
- Assure performance management system focuses on accountability for results
- Improve individual and organizational performance
- Recognize employee performance that is critical to achieving Agency's Mission
- Reward highest performing and most valuable employees in ways that are meaningful to them



What's In It For You?



- Through better communication and feedback, everyone can contribute to the organization's goals and objectives
- When you motivate and develop your employees to reach their potential, your job becomes easier
- You can identify areas of potential weakness in time to make mid-course corrections



What's In It For Your Employees?

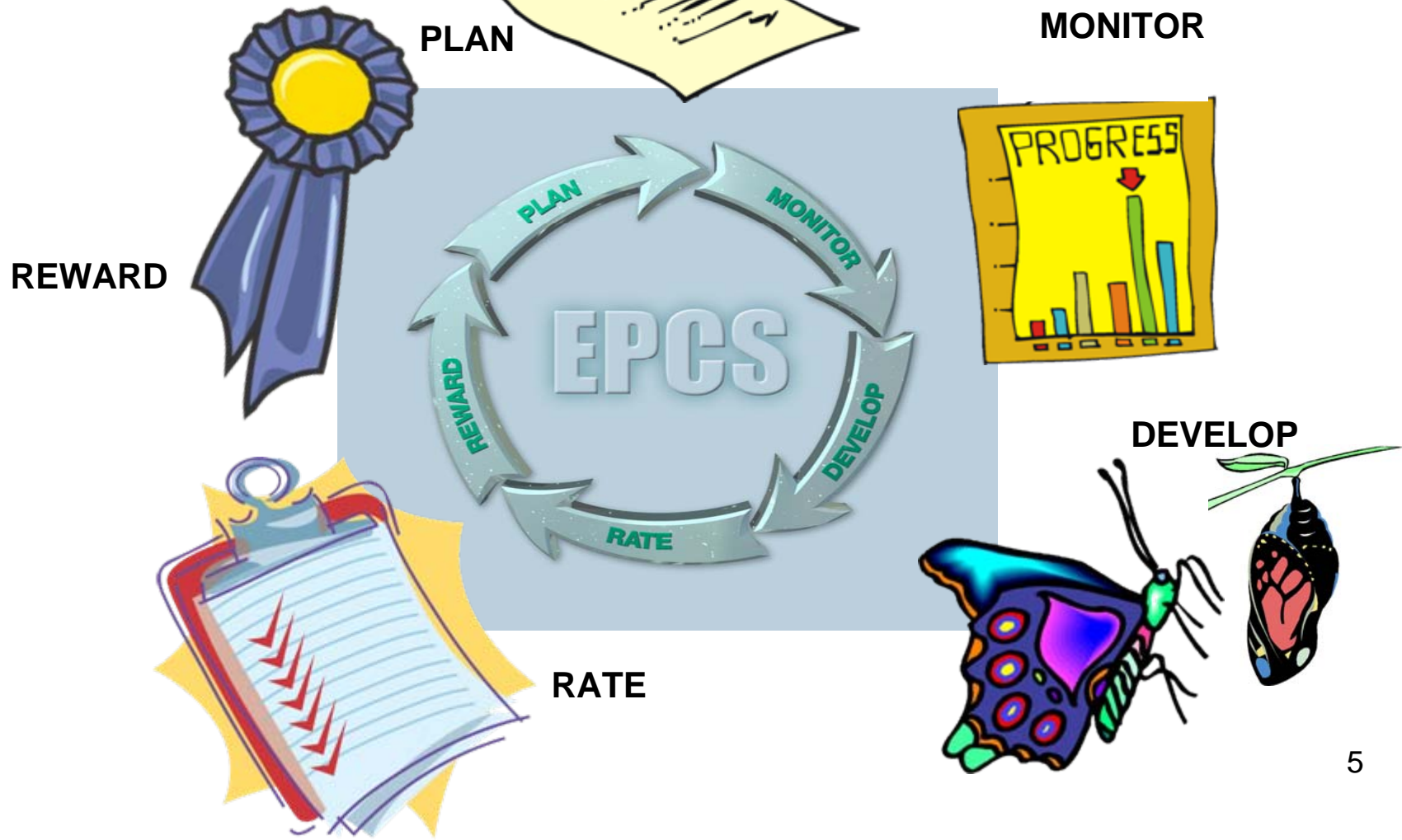


- Your employees will understand:
 - What you expect of them
 - How their day-to-day work supports NASA's Mission
 - How they will be assessed
 - That they have a responsibility to initiate and participate in regular, on-going communication and to seek guidance and feedback when needed/desired



The Performance Management Process

PERFORMANCE CULTURE





Planning for High Performance



PERFORMANCE CULTURE





Definitions For Components Of Performance Plan



- **Performance Element** tells employee “what” he/she must do

Critical Element: A work assignment or responsibility of such importance that unacceptable performance in that element would result in determination that employee’s overall performance summary rating is *Fails to Meet Expectations*; used to measure performance only at individual level



Definitions For Components Of Performance Plan (CONTINUED)



- **Performance Element** tells employee “what” he/she must do (*continued*):

Non-Critical Element: A dimension or aspect of individual, team, or organizational performance, exclusive of critical element, that is used in assigning a performance summary level

- May include, but not limited to, objectives, goals, program plans, work plans, and other means of expressing expected performance
 - Failure on non-critical element cannot be used as basis for performance-based adverse action nor can employee’s performance be summarized as *Fails to Meet Expectations* overall based on that failure
 - Non-critical does not mean not important
- **Performance Standard** is a broad statement of expected accomplishment or behavior



Definitions For Components Of Performance Plan *(CONTINUED)*



- **Performance Indicator** is an expression of a performance threshold, requirement, or expectation written at the *Meets Expectations* performance level that, when possible, should identify the measure(s) that will be used to evaluate the performance
 - A sufficient number of performance indicators must be identified for each standard to clearly communicate what has to be done or achieved in order to meet the standard
 - Measures appropriate for all employees
 - External effectiveness (quality and quantity)
 - Internal effectiveness (timeliness and cost-effectiveness)
 - Measures appropriate for some supervisory or like positions
 - Customer satisfaction
 - Employee involvement and innovation
 - Business results



Guidelines For Performance Elements And Standards



- Elements/standards must cascade from supervisory performance elements/standards (minimum requirements)
- Elements may be critical or non-critical; at least one element must be critical
- Additional elements/standards or more specific elements/standards related to employee's duties or specific projects, tasks, or assignments may be established
- Typically, performance plans will include 5–8 elements
- Each standard must have sufficient number of performance indicators to clearly communicate what has to be done or achieved to meet the standard



Writing Performance Indicators



Example 1 – Information is usually accurate and effectively presented
(e.g., presented in a clear, concise, and well-organized manner)

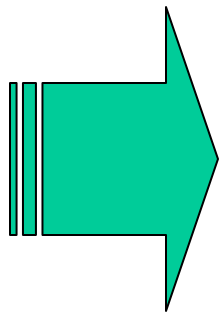
NOT

Information is always accurate and effectively presented

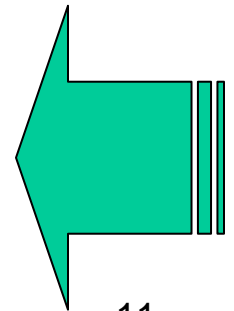
Example 2 – Assignments are generally completed by assigned deadlines

NOT

Assignments are always completed by assigned deadlines



Be sure to write standards/performance indicators at the “meets expectations” level





Beginning Of Appraisal Period



- Share with employee draft performance plan of all performance elements, standards, and identified performance indicators
- Provide employee opportunity to provide input and feedback
- Meet with employee:
 - Discuss performance expectations
 - “What” and “how” for each expectation
 - If possible, identify specific tasks/projects to be accomplished
 - How his/her plan is linked to the organization’s goals and objectives and Agency’s Strategic Plan



Beginning Of Appraisal Period



(CONTINUED)



- Meet with employee (CONTINUED):
 - Together determine need to identify additional performance elements and standards that:
 - Are specific and relevant to employee's duties and/or
 - Cascade from non-SES supervisory plans, if applicable (e.g., team leaders and program managers)
 - Agree to accept performance indicators as written, modify performance indicators if appropriate, or suggest alternative or additional indicators
 - Discuss rating criteria—how will accomplishments be measured (e.g., quality, quantity, and timeliness, if appropriate)

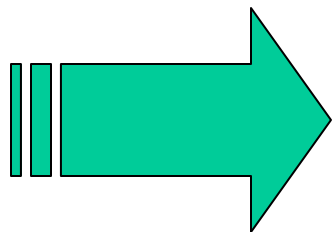


Beginning Of Appraisal Period

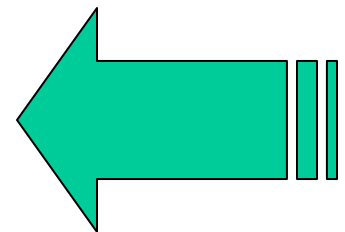
(CONTINUED)



- Meet with employee *(CONTINUED)*:
 - Express your willingness to provide support and guidance throughout the year
 - If at any time ambiguity exists, state that you and the employee will work together to clarify it
- Finalize performance plan, obtain employee's signature and sign the plan
 - Give copy of plan to employee
 - Retain original in accordance with Center procedures



Most importantly, have on-going, regular communication/feedback sessions with the employee!





Supervisor Checklist For Planning



Within 30 days of beginning of appraisal period ensure each employee has a performance plan

- ✓ Prepare draft of performance plan
 - ☐ Identify elements as critical or non-critical
 - ☐ Ensure that there are sufficient number of performance indicators for each standard to clearly communicate performance expectations to the employee
 - ☐ If necessary, identify additional performance elements, standards, and indicators relative to employee's duties
 - ☐ Typically plan will have 5-8 elements
 - ☐ At least one element must be critical



Supervisor Checklist For Planning *(CONTINUED)*



Within 30 days of beginning of appraisal period *(CONTINUED)* —

- ✓ Ask several questions about the performance plan
 - ☐ Are the critical elements truly critical?
 - ☐ Are the standards/performance indicators written at the “meets expectations” level of performance?
 - ☐ Are the standards/performance indicators clear?
 - ☐ Are the standards/performance indicators attainable?
 - ☐ Are the standards/performance indicators fair?
 - ☐ Are the standards/performance indicators applicable?
- ✓ Provide draft of plan to employee
 - ☐ Discuss employee’s feedback prior to finalizing plan



Supervisor Checklist For Planning *(CONTINUED)*



Within 30 days of beginning of appraisal period *(CONTINUED)* —

- ✓ Finalize plan and discuss with employee to ensure that employee understands:
 - ☐ What you expect of him/her relative to his/her performance
 - ☐ How his/her plan/work assignments are linked to organization's goals and objectives and Agency's Strategic Plan
 - ☐ How his/her accomplishments will be measured
- ✓ You and employee sign and date plan
 - ☐ Give copy to employee
 - ☐ Retain original in accordance with Center procedures



Monitoring Performance





During The Appraisal Period



- Provide the opportunity to succeed
- Provide continuous feedback
 - Observe your employees in action
 - Praise solid performance and build on it
 - Identify problem areas and coach to improve
- Recognize and reward, as appropriate, an employee's specific accomplishment in a timely manner
- Initiate a progress review at any time during appraisal period, especially when there is concern an employee will not meet a performance standard(s)
- Hold at least one progress review during appraisal period



During The Appraisal Period

(CONTINUED)



- Offer employee opportunity to provide input on his/her accomplishments relative to performance elements/standards for progress review
- Discuss employee's performance and training/development needs and requirements
- Make revisions to plan, if necessary
 - Minor modifications – pen/ink changes (both you and employee should initial and date)
 - Substantive changes (e.g., new element/standard; significant change to task/project) – revise form accordingly (note modification date on form)
- Document progress review has taken place (both you and employee initial and date form)



Encourage Your Employee To Participate



- Take opportunity to provide input on his/her accomplishments for progress review
- Initiate progress review at any time during appraisal period
- Ask for guidance/clarification when needed
- Discuss training and development needs, requirements, and opportunities



“Difficult” Conversations About Performance Challenges



- Can occur at any stage of the appraisal process
- Must occur as soon as it is apparent an employee might be rated *Fails to Meet Expectations* on any critical element and at least 30 days or more before the end of the appraisal period
- Can be initiated by either party



“Difficult” Conversations About Performance Challenges (CONTINUED)



- If you need guidance, seek assistance from your employee relations specialist!
- Meet with the employee to:
 - Notify employee of possible failure to meet expectations for critical element which could result in an adverse action
- NOTE: Although a *Fails to Meet Expectations* for a non-critical element will not result in an overall performance summary rating of *Fails to Meet Expectations* or an adverse action, it is in your and the employee's best interests to counsel employee regarding his/her performance.



“Difficult” Conversations About Performance Challenges *(CONTINUED)*



- If employee is member of bargaining unit, advise employee of right to union representation
- Begin discussion with a positive aspect of the employee's performance – focus on performance, not personality
- Identify the “problem” and explain your concerns
 - Performance element involved
 - How employee is failing to meet expectations
- Use examples to describe the effect this is having on the organization's goals and objectives



“Difficult” Conversations About Performance Challenges *(CONTINUED)*



- Clarify performance expectations, identify:
 - What is necessary for employee to meet expectations
- Check for understanding throughout discussion
- Provide employee an opportunity to explain his/her perspective
- Work towards agreement and a plan to improve performance
- Specify what assistance will be provided



“Difficult” Conversations About Performance Challenges *(CONTINUED)*



- End on an upbeat note, expressing confidence in the employee’s ability to pursue a positive course
- Document discussion and provide copy of documentation to employee
- Afterward, evaluate how the conversation went and identify any lessons learned



Performance Challenges Next Steps



If progress is not evident in reasonable time (usually 30 days):

- Seek assistance from your employee relations specialist!
- Issue Formal Warning Letter and establish Performance Improvement Plan (PIP)

Identifies:

- Critical element involved
 - How employee is failing to meet expectations
 - What must be done to meet expectations
 - What assistance will be provided and by whom
 - Period of time to improve (minimum of 30 days or in accordance with Center's negotiated agreements)
-
- Meetings – if employee is member of bargaining unit, allow for union representation



Performance Challenges Next Steps *(CONTINUED)*



If employee's performance is *Fails to Meet Expectations* at completion of PIP:

- Seek assistance from your employee relations specialist!
- Must take corrective action:
 - Reassignment
 - Change to lower grade (adverse action)
 - Removal (adverse action)
- Adverse actions require:
 - Proposal to change to lower grade/remove
 - 30-day advance notice period
 - Opportunity for employee to respond
 - Written decision letter



Supervisor' Checklist For Monitoring



- ✓ Provide on-going, regular communications and constructive feedback
- ✓ Show and express appreciation freely
- ✓ Recognize good performance as it occurs
 - ☐ If appropriate, and employee meets specific award criteria, take time to nominate
- ✓ Address performance issues as they arise



Supervisor Checklist For Monitoring *(CONTINUED)*



- ✓ Hold at least one progress review
- ☐ Offer employee opportunity to provide input of accomplishments
- ☐ Discuss:
 - ☐ Performance accomplishments
 - ☐ Any performance issues
 - ☐ Objectives and assignments for remainder of appraisal period
 - ☐ Training and development needs, requirements, and growth opportunities
- ☐ Revise plan if necessary
- ☐ Initial and date form (you and employee)

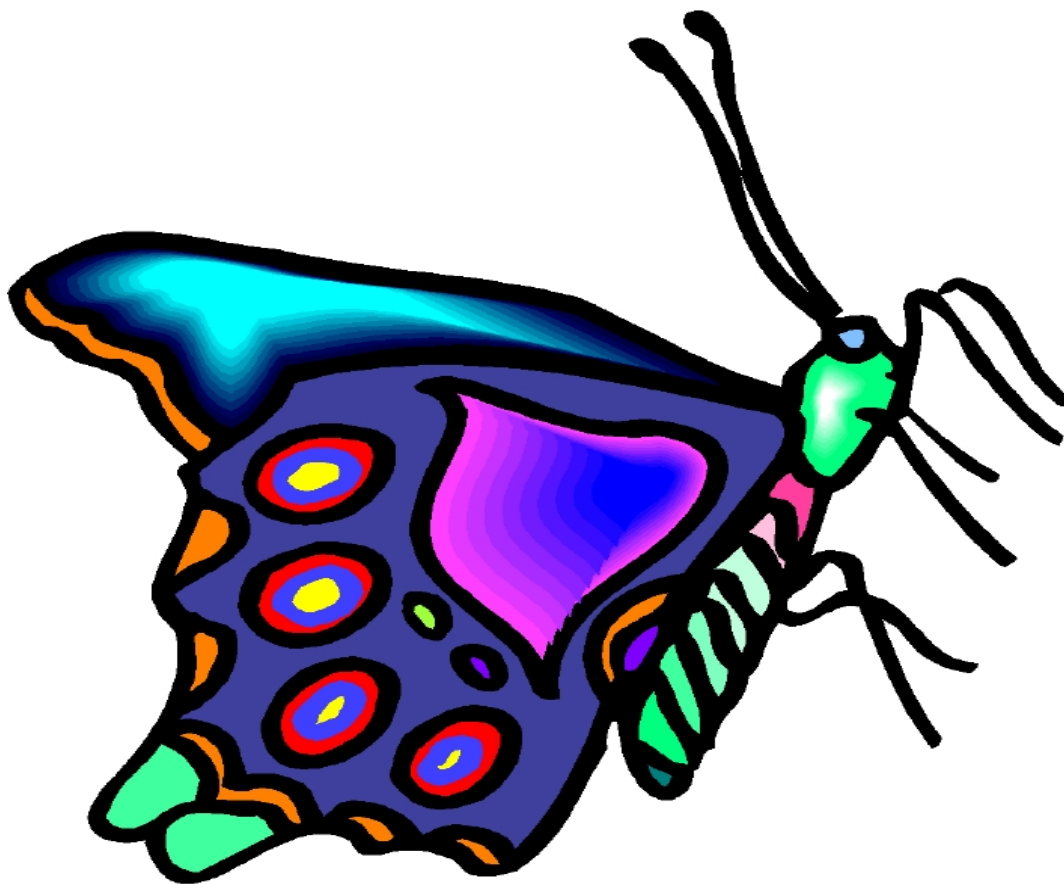


Employee Development and Training



PERFORMANCE CULTURE

PLAN → MONITOR → **DEVELOP** → RATE → REWARD





Employee Development and Training



PERFORMANCE CULTURE

PLAN → MONITOR → **DEVELOP** → RATE → REWARD

- At a minimum, discuss with employee his/her development and training needs and requirements
 - During performance planning
 - At mid-term progress review
 - At end of appraisal period
- Think about your organization's succession planning needs
- Discuss with employee:
 - His/her immediate and long-term career goals
 - Any “required” training (e.g., annual IT security)
 - Necessary training to develop needed skills and/or competencies
 - Desired training and development



Employee Development and Training *(CONTINUED)*



PERFORMANCE CULTURE

PLAN → MONITOR → **DEVELOP** → RATE → REWARD

- Certify on performance plan and appraisal form that discussion occurred
- Use discussion as basis for employee's Individual Development Plan



Rating Employee Performance



PERFORMANCE CULTURE

PLAN → MONITOR → DEVELOP → **RATE** → REWARD





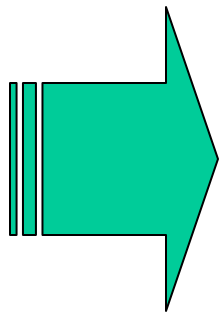
At the End of the Appraisal Period



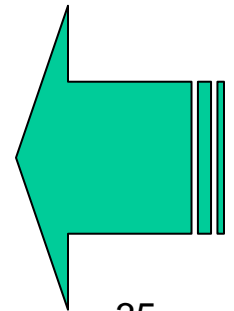
PERFORMANCE CULTURE

PLAN → MONITOR → DEVELOP → **RATE** → REWARD

- Complete appraisal as soon as practical after end of appraisal period – generally within 30 days (May 30)



Employee must have served under plan for at least 90 days





At the End of the Appraisal Period *(CONTINUED)*



PERFORMANCE CULTURE

PLAN → MONITOR → DEVELOP → **RATE** → REWARD

- Gather information regarding employee's performance
 - Encourage your employee to provide input about specific accomplishments and results relative to performance elements and standards
 - Work products
 - Feedback from other sources (customers, team members, supervisor of detail/other position)
 - If applicable, may request input from supervisor of detail/other position to be in writing



Rating Your Employee's Performance



PERFORMANCE CULTURE

PLAN → MONITOR → DEVELOP → **RATE** → REWARD

- Assess information gathered in relation to performance plan
- Rate each performance element the employee has had an opportunity to perform

Significantly Exceeds Expectations – performance that consistently exceeds performance standard and identified performance indicators to an exceptional degree

Employee:

- Consistently produces exceptional quality and quantity of work
- Completes assignments significantly ahead of schedule
- Significantly affects his/her field
- Performs work with unusual degree of initiative



Rating Your Employee's Performance *(CONTINUED)*



PERFORMANCE CULTURE

PLAN → MONITOR → DEVELOP → **RATE** → REWARD

- Rate each performance element employee has had an opportunity to perform *(continued)*

Meets or Exceeds Expectations – a broad range of performance that at least fully meets (you are generally satisfied) or may exceed (you are very satisfied) performance standard and identified performance indicators

You are generally satisfied that:

- Employee completes assignments by deadlines
- Quality and/or quantity of products meets minimum required
- Tasks performed with expected amount of supervisory direction

(continued on next slide)



Rating Your Employee's Performance *(CONTINUED)*



PERFORMANCE CULTURE

PLAN → MONITOR → DEVELOP → **RATE** → REWARD

- Rate each performance element employee has had an opportunity to perform *(continued)*

Meets or Exceeds Expectations (continued) —

You are very satisfied that:

- Employee frequently completes assignments before deadlines
- Quality and quantity of products typically exceeds minimum required
- Employee frequently displays initiative beyond the expected

Fails to Meet Expectations



Rating Your Employee's Performance (CONTINUED)



PERFORMANCE CULTURE

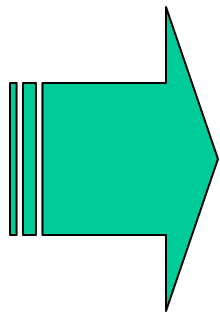
PLAN → MONITOR → DEVELOP → **RATE** → REWARD

- Assign a performance summary rating level

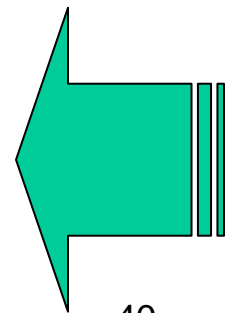
Distinguished – all rated critical and non-critical elements must be rated as *Significantly Exceeds Expectations*

Meets or Exceeds Expectations – all rated critical elements must be rated as *Meets or Exceeds Expectations*

Fails to Meet Expectations – performance for any critical element that is rated *Fails to Meet Expectations*



A rating of *Distinguished* or *Fails to Meet Expectations* must be approved by higher level official (Reviewing Official)





Rating Your Employee's Performance (CONTINUED)



PERFORMANCE CULTURE

PLAN → MONITOR → DEVELOP → **RATE** → REWARD

- Write narrative summary
 - Describe significant aspects of employee's job performance and rationale for rating
 - A rating of *Distinguished* or *Fails to Meet Expectations* must be supported by a narrative that is substantive and clearly and completely justifies the rating
- Think about the overall message you want to convey



Rating Your Employee's Performance *(CONTINUED)*



PERFORMANCE CULTURE

PLAN → MONITOR → DEVELOP → **RATE** → REWARD

- Meet with employee and discuss:
 - Accomplishments and performance rating assigned
 - Improvement needed, if any
 - Training and development needs and requirements, and if appropriate, growth opportunities



Rating Your Employee's Performance *(CONTINUED)*



PERFORMANCE CULTURE

PLAN → MONITOR → DEVELOP → **RATE** → REWARD

- Sign and date performance plan and appraisal form (you and employee)
 - Provide employee with signed copy
 - If provided, file and retain employee's input and/or input from supervisor of detail/other position with performance plan and appraisal form
 - File in accordance with Center procedures
 - All performance-related records must be retained for 4 years and destroyed in accordance with Center procedures



Performance Appraisal Disagreements



PERFORMANCE CULTURE

PLAN → MONITOR → DEVELOP → **RATE** → REWARD

- Reconsideration requests
 - An employee who disagrees with his/her rating of record may submit a request for reconsideration (normally within 15 days from date rating was received)
 - Employee will be given opportunity to present supporting information
 - Rating Official must reconsider and issue a decision within a reasonable time (normally within 10 days)



Performance Appraisal Disagreements *(CONTINUED)*

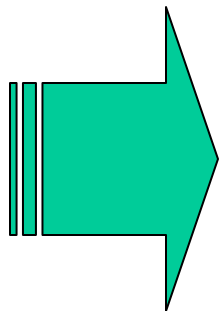


PERFORMANCE CULTURE

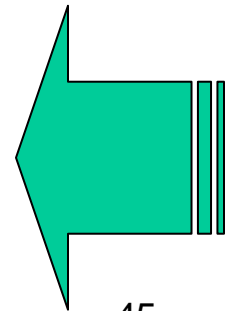
PLAN → MONITOR → DEVELOP → **RATE** → REWARD

- Grievances

- If employee is dissatisfied with reconsideration decision, may file grievance in accordance with formal grievance procedure (normally within 5 days of receipt of reconsideration decision)
- If employee did not first request reconsideration, must file grievance in accordance with informal grievance procedure



NOTE: Timeframes may vary
in accordance with local
union negotiated agreements





Supervisor Checklist For Rating



PERFORMANCE CULTURE

PLAN → MONITOR → DEVELOP → **RATE** → REWARD

- ✓ Ensure employee has served under performance plan for at least 90 days before rating performance
- ✓ Gather and assess information from:
 - ☐ Employee
 - ☐ Other appropriate sources



Supervisor Checklist For Rating (CONTINUED)



PERFORMANCE CULTURE

PLAN → MONITOR → DEVELOP → **RATE** → REWARD

- ✓ Rate each performance element employee has had opportunity to perform
 - ☐ *Significantly Exceeds Expectations*
 - ☐ *Meets or Exceeds Expectations*
 - ☐ *Fails to Meet Expectations*

- ✓ Assign a performance summary rating level
 - ☐ *Distinguished*
 - ☐ *Meets or Exceeds Expectations*
 - ☐ *Fails to Meet Expectations*

- ✓ Write narrative summary



Supervisor Checklist For Rating *(CONTINUED)*



PERFORMANCE CULTURE

PLAN → MONITOR → DEVELOP → **RATE** → REWARD

- ✓ Meet with employee to discuss
 - ☐ His/her performance and accomplishments
 - ☐ If applicable, areas where he/she might need improvement
 - ☐ Training and development needs and requirements
 - ☐ His/her goals for the future and, if applicable, growth opportunities
 - ☐ The summary rating assigned, allowing employee an opportunity to read narrative
 - ☐ Sign and date form (you and employee)
- ✓ Give employee copy of signed form
- ✓ Retain original in accordance with Center procedures



Rewarding High Performance





Before Proposing An Award



- Know what motivates your employee
 - Think beyond financial reward and recognition
- Know what is meaningful to your employee
 - Monetary Award
 - Honorary Award
 - Time off
 - Opportunity to
 - Travel
 - Participate in a training course
 - Attend a conference
 - Present a paper at a conference



Before Proposing An Award

(CONTINUED)



- Know where and how he/she would like to be recognized
 - Publicly, in front of peers and/or others
 - Privately, one on one



Award Eligibility Based on Performance



PERFORMANCE CULTURE

PLAN → MONITOR → DEVELOP → RATE → **REWARD**

- Employee's performance must meet or exceed expectations for all rated elements (both **critical and non-critical**) to be eligible for monetary/non-monetary awards based on performance
 - Only an employee with a performance summary rating of *Distinguished* is eligible for a Quality Step Increase (QSI)
 - An employee with a performance summary rating of *Meets or Exceeds Expectations* is eligible for monetary/non-monetary awards only if performance element rating for all rated elements (critical and non-critical) was *Meets or Exceeds Expectations*
 - An employee with a performance summary rating of *Meets or Exceeds Expectations* but a *Fails to Meet Expectations* performance element rating for a non-critical element is ineligible for a performance award



When Giving an Award



PERFORMANCE CULTURE



- Consider each employee or groups of employees (i.e., cultural diversity, gender, grade, occupational category) for recognition when criteria are met
- When based on annual rating of record:
 - Determine appropriate level of recognition commensurate with the level of contribution towards the achievement of the organization's goals and objectives
 - Ensure narrative summary clearly supports giving an award
- When based on criteria (e.g., Honor awards):
 - Ensure criteria are met
 - Take the time to write a “winning” nomination
 - Inform the employee that you are nominating him/her and for what award



When Giving an Award

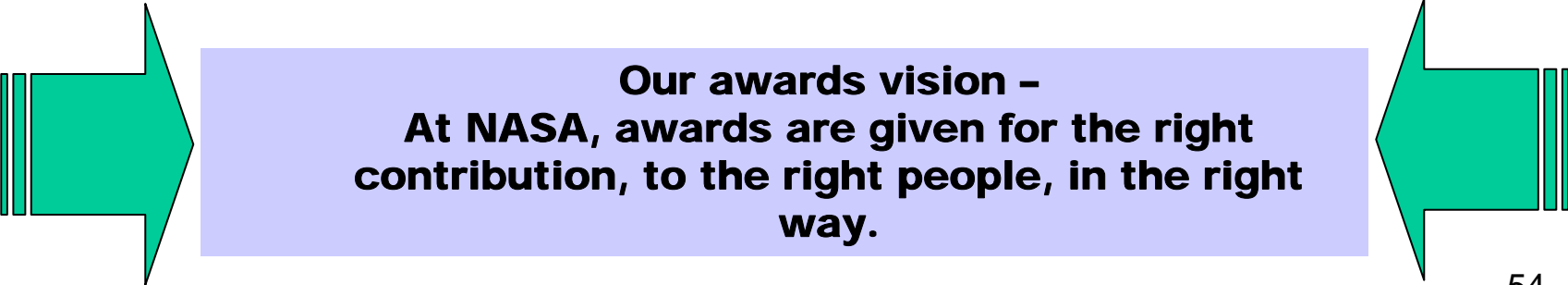
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PERFORMANCE CULTURE



- Give recognition and awards as close to the time of contribution as possible
- Communicate to all your employees your rationale for recognizing a particular employee(s) by identifying:
 - The specific contribution (accomplishments) toward the achievement of organization's goals and objectives
 - Embodiment of One NASA behaviors
 - Commitment to The NASA Values



Our awards vision –
At NASA, awards are given for the right
contribution, to the right people, in the right
way.



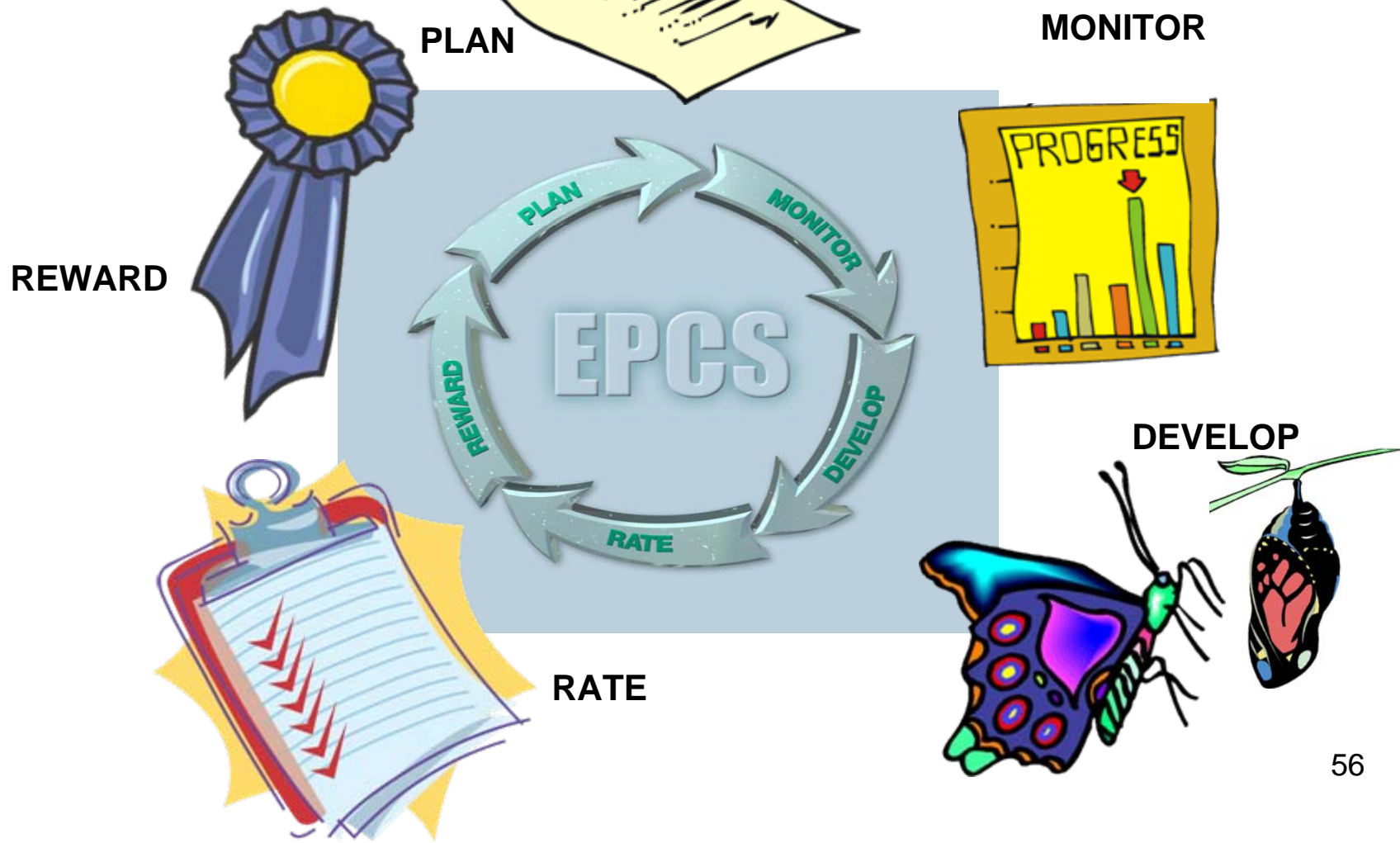
When No Award Is Given



- Stay calm
- Listen to your employee
- Discuss with the employee the specific reasons that support your decision
- When possible, identify specific behaviors or accomplishments that may help the employee achieve success in the future
- Offer any assistance you can in order to provide the employee with an opportunity to achieve success in the next appraisal period

End of the Appraisal Period

PERFORMANCE CULTURE





End of the Appraisal Period Assessment – How Did You Do?



PERFORMANCE CULTURE

PLAN → MONITOR → DEVELOP → RATE → REWARD

- Within your organization, look at the distribution of –
 - The performance summary ratings
 - Are the majority of your employees' ratings *Meets or Exceeds Expectations*?
 - If you have rated an employee(s) *Distinguished*, will it be obvious to all other employees why you did so?
 - The performance awards
 - Is there a correlation between the distribution of ratings and the number and dollar amounts of the awards?
 - Ratings and awards by groups (i.e., cultural diversity, gender, grade, occupational category)
 - Are all groups fairly represented?



You Are Accountable



PERFORMANCE CULTURE

PLAN → MONITOR → DEVELOP → RATE → REWARD

- Lead by example – be a role model
- Abide by The NASA Values
- Exhibit the One NASA behaviors
- Work towards the achievement of the Agency's goal
- Show respect for and value individual and cultural differences and ensure an environment free of discrimination and harassment
- Create an environment where your employees and contractors feel free to speak up without fear of retribution



You Are Accountable

(CONTINUED)



PERFORMANCE CULTURE

PLAN → MONITOR → DEVELOP → RATE → REWARD

- Listen to and give full and fair consideration to the views and divergent opinions of your employees and others
- Regularly communicate, provide encouragement and constructive feedback, and express appreciation to your employees
- Ensure that your decision process for appraising and rewarding employees is fair and equitable and transparent to your employees and others



More Information



PERFORMANCE CULTURE



- The NASA Employee Performance Communication System (EPCS) –
<http://nasapeople.nasa.gov/perform/index.htm>
- NASA NPR 3430.1A and Performance Plan and Appraisal Forms –
<http://nasapeople.nasa.gov/perform/pm.htm>
- The NASA Awards and Recognition Program –
<http://nasapeople.nasa.gov/awards/default.htm>
- OPM's Performance Management Overview –
<http://www.opm.gov/perform/overview.asp>



Additional Resources



PERFORMANCE CULTURE



- On-line Courses from www.golearn.gov
 - Managing Performance: Overcoming Performance Appraisal Challenges (41053)
 - Communication Skills for Successful Management (MGMT0122)
 - Frontline Leadership: Knowledge in the Workplace (46102)
 - Correcting Performance Problems: Addressing Performance Problems (41062)
- Video

Performance Appraisals: Getting Results
(Available from The Society for Human Resource Management Bookstore)



Additional Resources

(CONTINUED)



PERFORMANCE CULTURE

PLAN → MONITOR → DEVELOP → RATE → REWARD

- Books

- Stress-free Performance Appraisals, Sharon Armstrong
- 1001 Rewards & Recognition Fieldbook
The Complete Guide, Bob Nelson and Dean Spitzer
- 201 Ways to Turn Any Employee into a Star Performer,
Casey F. Hawley
- Effective Phrases for Performance Appraisals
A Guide to Successful Evaluations, James E. Neal, Jr.